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texts and myths, the writings of Philo and Origen, able as they were in their way, would have seemed nothing but a mass of confusion. Mr. Elsee himself has noted that, when it was a question of dealing with doctrines founded on assumed revelations, he left the polemic to disciples like Porphyry, of the second order in speculative power but with more philological interest.

The relation between Neoplatonism and Christianity is in fact only one case of the general relation between the ancient culture and the new religion. It is really difficult to exaggerate the impermeability of the classical tradition, as long as it lasted, to Judæo-Christian influences. Of course it may be said that this shows the deadness of that tradition. The new in its inchoate form contained the promise of life. It could assimilate the elements of the old that it needed, while this could not take up anything from it in return. This no doubt was true for the time. Lucian, as Mr. Elsee notes, had seen in the second century the impossibility of maintaining classicism in religion. The result therefore was destruction as the preparation for a new birth. What a philosopher of sufficient originality could still do was to carry thought forward to a point at which it could both seriously influence the intermediate period and become the starting-point of the next great transformation.

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SOME ASPECTS OF RABBINIC THEOLOGY. By S. Schechter, M. A., Litt. D. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1909. Pp. xxii, 384.

It is a most unfortunate result of the acrimonious hostility that has prevailed between Judaism and Christianity ever since the great schism which threw off the daughter body at a tangent from the mother that even to this day there has been given to the world no adequate presentation of Judaism. It must be admitted by the Jewish theologians that the prime fault lies at their own doors, because as yet they have failed to make proper presentation of their theology and life to the Gentiles. They have written for their native audiences on provincial lines and on domestic subjects, ignoring out of a proud indifference

the necessity of an apologetic to the world. Yet this religion is worthy of a complete and truthful apologetic; if it is not customarily rated among the universal religions of the world, except in a historical sense, the blame lies with its professors, who thereby fall short of the universalism which lies on the face of their religion. Hence for presentations of Judaism, all except those rabbinically trained must have recourse chiefly to books written by Christian scholars, some of which are works of enormous industry and patience, but all of which are condemned by Jewish scholars as lacking a proportionate understanding of their religion, and as, in most cases, animated by an antagonistic spirit. Hence such books as Weber's "Jüdische Theologie" and Bousset's "Religion des Judentums im Zeitalter Jesu Christi" are faulted, even bitterly, as inadequate presentations. And there must be some truth in such criticisms, for none can write intimately about a living religion except those who are inside. In apologetic and self-assertion Judaism has certainly fallen short of its ideal, although the centuries of opprobrium under which the Jew has suffered offer an excuse for this lack.

But with the emancipation of the Jews in more modern times and with their growing sense of power as a vital factor in the world's life, their scholars are coming to take a more positive position. They are admitted now on equal terms into scholastic and theological forums, and such productions as the *Jewish Quarterly Review* and the *Jewish Encyclopædia* evince a fresh and healthy purpose to maintain their own in the presence of all rival theologies and systems. In fact, we may suppose that they feel the need of establishing a certain defensive apologetic of their faith for the sake of their own adherents, when the very liberation which has emancipated the Jew threatens to break down the barriers that have held the race together as a peculiar people.

A book like this of Dr. Schechter's is most welcome because it comes from one of the greatest living Jewish scholars, who, with a profound faith in his religion and his people, nevertheless is a man of the world in his scholastic culture and his human sympathies. The work has a modest scope, "Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology"; there is no attempt at a complete presentation of Judaism, though we trust that the same hand may be spared to give the world a more thorough treatment,

because Jewish theology is a most baffling subject, more complicated and elaborate than even the intelligent man is wont to think, regarding Judaism as merely a preliminary stage to Christianity and maintaining its existence only as a foil thereto.

After an introductory chapter dealing with the scope of his subject, the author treats in six chapters the theological idea—original with Judaism—of the kingdom of God. This discussion is of great importance to Christian theologians. It may be noted that Schechter regards Messianism as an integral element of Judaism. The succeeding chapters would probably be of more interest to the readers of the JOURNAL, the writer taking up in them the topics of the law, imputed righteousness, holiness, saintliness, sin and its origin, divine grace, repentance and reconciliation,—in a word, the method of the moral and spiritual life of the Jew. Dr. Schechter denies the current interpretation of *torah* as law,—it means instruction (though it was the Hellenistic Jews who translated it by *nomos*, a term to which he objects)—and especially girds at the view which has prevailed in the Christian Church since the days of Paul that the law was a yoke and burden upon the Jew for whom the gospel was a blessed emancipation. He shows that Protestant theologians and modern liberal students have been unfair to the spirit of Judaism, which has found in “the yoke of the law” a delight. May we suppose that the law has itself exercised an eliminating effect upon the Jewish community, sloughing off the elements which found that yoke a burden? A parallel to these contradictory views of the law is found at the end of the Middle Ages. Who would think, from reading Thomas à Kempis, with his absorption in the sacramental and monastic systems of the church, that the great storm of the Reformation was even then brewing? And so in our judgment upon the spiritual value of the law: there were the many who from the psalmists down found it an almost intoxicating delight, while others, whose classic example is Paul and of whom no statistics are obtainable, felt it to be a curse.

Very much in these chapters is of prime importance to the student of the spiritual ideas of Christendom. Indeed, the study of Christian origins has by no means done justice to Judaism, especially in regard to the ethical contributions of the mother to the daughter church. The Jewish ideas of righteousness, sin, reconciliation, run parallel to those of Christianity, and

we believe that this field is of far more importance in the investigation of Christian ethics than the eclectic Græco-Roman world to which contemporary theology is now devoting its researches. Even where there is not interfusion of Jewish and Christian influences, the correspondence may be often due to parallel developments from the common stock of Rabbinism, which was already established in principle and essence before the rise of the Christian Church.

The book is concluded with a valuable bibliography of the Jewish authorities referred to and an admirable topical index.

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GOD. AN ENQUIRY INTO THE NATURE OF MAN'S HIGHEST IDEAL AND A SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM FROM THE STANDPOINT OF SCIENCE. By Paul Carus. Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Company, 1908. Pp. iv, 249.

This volume forms a part of the "Christianity of To-Day Series." It presents the conception of God to which the author has been led by his own experience and reflection, and which he regards as Christian as well as scientifically correct. Forced by his intellectual growth to abandon the ideas of his youth, he could find no satisfaction amid the ruins of his supernatural world. From atheism he worked his way to what to him is a Christian idea of God, even though some of his friends insist upon styling it "the God-conception of atheism." He now utters his message, not hesitatingly, as guesses at the riddle of existence, but with confidence, as the solution of the problem of the ages. He has no sympathy with an agnosticism that continues to hold the judgment in suspense after arguments have been advanced sufficient to bring conviction to his mind.

Dr. Carus is convinced that the existence of God is scientifically demonstrable. But this god is not an extra-cosmic individual, nor the sum of all things, but the formal principle, the cosmic order, the uniformities of nature. Beyond the world of matter and energy, there is the intrinsic reality of those eternal laws of form, formulated in logic, arithmetic, geometry, algebra, pure mechanics, and pure natural science, dealing with